

SECTION 2

SUMMARY OF CHANGES SINCE THE 1996 305(b) GUIDELINES

This section summarizes changes since the 1996 *Guidelines*. The changes are grouped below by topic.

2.1 New Format for the *Guidelines*

- C** These *Guidelines* are presented in two documents. The volume you are reading now describes the information to be included in State 305(b) reports. A separate *Guidelines Supplement* includes extensive information on recommended procedures for conducting assessments developed over the past 10 years by EPA and the 305(b) Consistency Workgroup
- C** New material since 1996 is contained in the *Guidelines Supplement* and its Appendixes:
 - Appendix B: Benefits of Rotating Basin Monitoring and Assessment: South Carolina
 - Appendix C: Water Environmental Indicators and 305(b) Reporting
 - Appendix D: Data Dictionary for Annual Electronic Reporting
 - Appendix G: Definitions of Selected Source Categories
 - Appendix I: 305(b) Monitoring and Assessment Design Focus Group Handouts
 - Appendix K: Section 106 Monitoring Guidance and Guidance for 303(d) Lists
 - Appendix M: Section 319 v. 314 Funding

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2.2 New Information on the Context of 305(b)

- Section 1 of this volume describes the linkages among the 305(b) cycle, annual electronic reporting, georeferencing, national water environmental indicators, Performance Partnership Agreements, and other recent initiatives.
- A brochure entitled “The Updated 305(b) Cycle: Advantages, Context, and Expectations” accompanies these *Guidelines*. It is intended for management of State water agencies, explaining the above concepts and linkages.

2.3 Annual/Biennial Electronic Reporting

- Electronic updates of the 305(b) databases are key to the 305(b) process for 1998 and beyond; Section 6 of this volume describes data elements, format, and other matters.
- Electronic reporting will include a new voluntary pilot biological integrity indicator. Section 4 of the *Guidelines Supplement* describes an approach to measuring and reporting this indicator. States/Tribes will only report the indicator in annual electronic reporting.

2.4 Comprehensive and Targeted Coverage

- Sections 1.6 and 4 of this volume and Section 2 of the *Guidelines Supplement* contain information on achieving the long-term goal of comprehensively characterizing all waters of the State on a regular basis. This includes descriptions and brief examples of different monitoring designs that a State/Tribe can use to make defensible statements about use attainment of all its waters.

2.5 Individual Use Support

- Section 3 of the *Guidelines Supplement* includes expanded guidance for making aquatic life use support decisions, including additional information on using habitat and toxicity data and case studies of assessments involving multiple data types

2.6 Ground Water and Drinking Water

- Section 5 of this volume contains revised guidance for reporting ground water assessments of aquifers or hydrogeologic settings based on work by the 305(b) Ground Water Subgroup

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- c Section 3.5 of the *Guidelines Supplement* contains recommendations for making drinking water use assessments based on work by the 305(b) Drinking Water Subgroup